

REMARKS

This Response to Office Action is filed in response to the Office Action dated January 31, 2002. Claims 1 to 6 and 13 to 20 have been amended. Claims 7 to 12 have been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer. New Claims 21 to 40 have been added.

A Petition for a two-month Extension of Time to respond to the Office Action is submitted herewith. A Supplemental Information Disclosure Statement is submitted herewith. Checks in the amount of \$180.00 and \$1,072.00 are submitted herewith to cover the cost of the two-month Extension, Supplemental Information Disclosure Statement and the additional claims. Please charge Deposit Account No. 02-1818 for any insufficiency or credit for any overpayment. Attached hereto is a marked-up version of the changes made to the specification and claims by the current response. The attached page is captioned "**VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE.**"

The Examiner rejected Claims 1 to 20 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,089,976 (Schneider) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,290,600 B1 (Glasson). The claims have been amended to overcome this rejection and new claims have been added which are patentably distinguished over the references of record.

Schneider discloses a gaming device including a plurality of choices which are displayed by a display device including a touch screen. The gaming device enables the player to select the choices one at a time by touching the screen. Immediately after each choice is selected by the player, a bonus amount associated with that choice is revealed to the player. The player selects choices until two matching bonus amounts are revealed. When two matching bonus amounts are revealed, the game ends and the player is provided with that bonus amount. Accordingly, Schneider includes player selectable symbols; however, such symbols are not on reels and do not interact with each other.

Glasson discloses a plurality of reels with a bonus symbol 16 which includes a feature symbol 18. In the illustrated embodiment, the bonus symbol 16 includes the frog and the lily pad. The frog is the feature symbol 18. When a

landing symbol 20 occurs on a reel adjacent to the reel on which the bonus symbol 16 occurs, the feature symbol or frog 18 jumps from the bonus symbol 16 to the landing symbol 20 on the adjacent reel. In the illustrated embodiment, the landing symbol 20 is a lily pad. The player is awarded a bonus based on the number of reels the feature symbol 18 can progress through (i.e., how many adjacent reels have landing symbols or lily pads 20). If the feature symbol 20 can progress through all of the adjacent reels, a jackpot bonus is awarded to the player. The symbols in Glasson are not player selectable.

Amended Claim 1 is directed to a gaming device having a gaming scheme. The gaming device includes a controller and a plurality of reels controlled by the controller. At least two player selectable interacting symbols are on the reels. The gaming device also includes a display device controlled by the controller and adapted to display the reels and the generated interacting symbols interacting with each other after the interacting symbols are generated on the reels and a player selects one of the interacting symbols generated on the reels. The gaming device also includes means controlled by the controller for enabling the player to select one of the selectable interacting symbols. The combination of Schneider and Glasson do not disclose, teach or suggest a plurality of reels having at least two player selectable interacting symbols thereon, and in particular player selectable symbols which interact with each other after the interacting symbols are generated on the reels and a player selects one of the interacting symbols on the reels. Schneider does not disclose player selectable symbols on reels. Glasson does not disclose a symbol such as the symbols in Schneider interacting with another such symbol, rather it discloses a feature symbol 18 moving from one landing symbol to another landing symbol. The bonus symbol 16 and the landing symbol 20 do not interact with each other as set forth in amended Claim 1. If Schneider and Glasson are combined as set forth in amended Claim 1, such combination would destroy the functionality of Glasson in part because the landing symbols are randomly generated, not player selectable. Additionally, the landing symbols 20 of Glasson do not interact with the feature symbol or frog (i.e., both symbols do not influence or act in

conjunction with the other symbol). The feature symbol or frog 18 does not influence or act in conjunction with the lily pad or landing symbol 20 (i.e., the landing symbol or lily pad does not move). In the present invention, both symbols interact with each other. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that amended Claim 1 is patentably distinguished over the references of record and is in condition for allowance. It is also respectfully submitted that amended Claims 2 to 6 which depend from amended Claim 1 are also patentably distinguished over the references of record and are in condition for allowance.

Amended Claim 13 is directed to a method for operating a gaming device having a gaming scheme with a plurality of symbols including at least two player selectable interacting symbols on a plurality of reels. The method includes the steps of randomly generating and displaying a plurality of said symbols on the reels, enabling a player to select one of the interacting symbols if at least two interacting symbols are randomly generated and displayed on the reels, displaying an interaction between the interacting symbols, and providing an award to the player which is associated with the selected interacting symbol. The combination of Schneider and Glasson do not disclose, teach or suggest at least two player selectable interacting symbols on a plurality of reels and an interaction between the two selectable interacting symbols as discussed above. The combination of Schneider and Glasson also do not disclose, teach or suggest providing an award to the player based on the selected interacting symbol (as opposed to Schneider which discloses a bonus amount associated with the matched selections). The award provided in Glasson is based on how many landing symbols 20 appear on adjacent reels. It is therefore respectfully submitted that amended Claim 13 is patentably distinguished over the references of record and is in condition for allowance. It is also respectfully submitted that amended Claims 14 to 20 which depend from amended Claim 13 are also patentably distinguished over the references of record and are in condition for allowance.

Similar to amended Claim 1, new Claim 21 is directed to a gaming device including a display device, a plurality of reels displayed by the display device,

and a plurality of symbols on the reels. The symbols include a plurality of non-interacting symbols and at least two player selectable interacting symbols. A payline is associated with the reels and a processor controls the display device. The processor is operable to enable a player to select one of the selectable interacting symbols when the interacting symbols are randomly generated on the payline associated with on the reels, cause the display device to display the selected interacting symbol interacting with another of the interacting symbols generated on the payline associated with the reels, and provide an award to the player associated with one of the interacting symbols. The combination of Schneider and Glasson do not disclose, teach or suggest the combination of Claim 21 for the reasons set forth above. Additionally, Claim 21 includes a payline associated with the reels and requires the interacting symbols to be randomly generated on the payline for the selected interacting symbols to interact with each other. This is not disclosed or suggested in Schneider and Glasson (i.e., Glasson discloses paylines, but does not require the landing symbols 20 to be on the payline with the other landing symbols). It is therefore respectfully submitted that new Claim 21 is patentably distinguished over the references of record and is in condition for allowance. It is also respectfully submitted that new Claims 22 to 25 are patentably distinguished over the references of record and are in condition for allowance.

New Claim 26 is directed to a gaming device including a display device, a plurality of reels displayed by the display advice, and a plurality of symbols on the reels. The symbols include a plurality of non-interacting symbols and at least three interacting symbols. The gaming device also includes a processor which controls the display device. Upon the random generation of the interacting symbols on the reels, the processor is operable to cause the display device to display all of the interacting symbols simultaneously interacting with each other and provide an award to the player associated with one of the interacting symbols. The combination of Schneider and Glasson do not disclose, teach or suggest at least three interacting symbols simultaneously interacting with each other and to provide an award associated with one of the interacting symbols. It

is therefore respectfully submitted that new Claim 26 is patentably distinguished over the references of record and is in condition for allowance. It is also respectfully submitted that new Claims 27 to 29 which depend from Claim 26 are patentably distinguished over the references of record and are in condition for allowance.

New Claim 30 is directed to a gaming device including a display device, a plurality of reels displayed by the display device, and a plurality of symbols on the reels. The symbols include a plurality of non-interacting symbols and at least two interacting symbols. A payline is associated with the reels and a processor controls the display device. The processor is operable to cause the display device to display the entire interacting symbol interacting with another of the entire interacting symbols when the interacting symbols occur on the payline associated with the reels, and provide an award to the player associated with one of the interacting symbols. The combination of Schneider and Glasson do not disclose, teach or suggest the plurality of symbols on the reels including at least two interacting symbols wherein the entire interacting symbol interacts with another entire interacting symbol. As discussed above, in Glasson, only a portion of the bonus symbol 16 and specifically the feature symbol or frog 18 moves to the position of the landing symbols 20. It would have not been obvious to modify the combination of Glasson and Schneider in this respect because Glasson teaches away from this modification and such combination would destroy the purpose and functionality of Glasson. It is therefore respectfully submitted that new Claim 30 is patentably distinguished over the references of record and is in condition for allowance. It is also respectfully submitted that new Claims 31 and 32 which depend from new Claim 30 are patentably distinguished over the references of record and are in condition for allowance.

New Claim 33 is directed to a gaming device including a display device, a plurality of reels displayed by the display device, and a plurality of symbols on said reels. The symbols include a plurality of non-interacting symbols and a plurality of interacting symbols. An award from a plurality of awards is associated with each different pair of interacting symbols generated on the reels and a

processor controls the display device. The processor is operable to cause the display device to display one of the interacting symbols interacting with another of the interacting symbols when said interacting symbols are randomly generated on the reels and provide the award associated with said pair of interacting symbols to the player. The combination of Schneider and Glasson do not disclose, teach or suggest an award which is associated with each pair of interacting symbols. It is therefore respectfully submitted that new Claim 33 is patentably distinguished over the references of record and is in condition for allowance. It is also respectfully submitted that new Claim 34 which depends from new Claim 33 is patentably distinguished over the references of record and is in condition for allowance.

New Claim 35 is directed to a gaming device including a display device, a plurality of reels displayed by the display device, and a plurality of symbols on the reels. The symbols include a plurality of non-interacting symbols and at least two player selectable interacting symbols on non-adjacent reels. A payline is associated with the reels and a processor controls the display device. The processor is operable to enable a player to select one of the selectable interacting symbols when the interacting symbols are randomly generated on payline on non-adjacent reels, cause the display device to display the selected interacting symbol interacting with another of the interacting symbols, and provide an award to the player associated with the selected interacting symbol. The combination of Schneider and Glasson do not disclose, teach or suggest a plurality of player selectable symbols which when randomly generated on a payline on non-adjacent reels causes the display device to display the selected interacting symbol interacting with another of the interacting symbols, and to provide an award associated with the selected interacting symbol. It is therefore respectfully submitted that new Claim 35 is patentably distinguished over the references of record and is in condition for allowance.

New Claim 36 is directed to a method of operating a gaming device having a plurality of symbols including at least two interacting symbols on a plurality of reels. The method includes the steps of randomly determining and displaying a



plurality of the symbols on the reels, and displaying an interaction between at least two of the interacting symbols if the interacting symbols are randomly generated displayed on the reels. In such step, each interacting symbol performs at least one movement to interact with the other interacting symbol. The method also includes providing an award to a player associated with one of the interacting symbols. The combination of Schneider and Glasson do not disclose, teach or suggest each interacting symbol performing at least one movement to interact with the other interacting symbol and providing an award to the player associated with one of the interacting symbols. In this respect, the landing symbol or lily pad 20 of Glasson does not move to interact with the other symbol at all. It is therefore respectfully submitted that new Claim 36 is patentably distinguished over the references of record and is in condition for allowance. It is also respectfully submitted that new Claims 37 to 40 which depend from new Claim 36 are patentably distinguished over the references of record and are in condition for allowance.

An earnest endeavor has been made to place this application in condition for formal allowance and is courteously solicited. If the Examiner has any questions regarding this Response, applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner contact the applicant's attorney, Adam Masia, at (312) 807-4284 to discuss this Response.

Respectfully submitted,

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VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

In the Specification:

Paragraph (added in the Preliminary Amendment) beginning on page 1, after line 2 has been amended as follows:

This application is related to the following commonly-owned co-pending patent applications: "GAMING DEVICE WITH TRAVELING REEL SYMBOLS," Serial No. 09/606,928, Attorney Docket No. 0112300-007; "GAMING DEVICE WITH MULTI-PURPOSE REELS," Serial No. 10/023,268, Attorney Docket No. 0112300-973; "GAMING DEVICE WITH MOVING SCREEN SIMULATION," Serial No. 09/625,884, Attorney Docket No. 0112300-021; "GAMING DEVICE WITH SIGNIFIED REEL SYMBOLS," Serial No. 09/990,484, Attorney Docket No. 0112300-966; "GAMING DEVICE HAVING TOUCH ACTIVATED ALTERNATING OR CHANGING SYMBOL," Serial No. 09/602,331, Attorney Docket No. 0112300-029; "GAMING DEVICE PROVIDING TOUCH ACTIVATED SYMBOL INFORMATION," Serial No. 09/680,349, Attorney Docket No. 0112300-030; "GAMING DEVICE HAVING A CHANGEABLE OBJECT," Serial No. 09/680,111, Attorney Docket No. 0112300-137; "GAMING DEVICE WITH TRAVELING REEL SYMBOLS; Serial No. 09/689,197, Attorney Docket No. 0112300-153; and "GAMING DEVICE HAVING A SYMBOL COVERING FEATURE," Serial No. 09/684,275, Attorney Docket No. 0112300-154.

In the Claims:

Claim 1 has been amended as follows:

1. (Amended) A gaming device having a gaming scheme ~~with interacting symbols~~, said gaming device comprising:

a controller;

a plurality of reels controlled by the controller, said reels having at least two said player selectable interacting symbols ~~connected to the controller~~; and;

a display device controlled by the controller and adapted to display the reels and said interacting symbols interacting with each other after said interacting symbols are generated on the reels and a player selects one of the interacting symbols generated on the reels; and

means controlled by the controller for enabling the player to select one of the selectable interacting symbols.

Claim 2 has been amended as follows:

2. (Amended) The gaming device of Claim 1, which includes an award provided to the player which is ~~the display device displaying adjacent interacting symbols.~~

Claim 3 has been amended as follows:

3. (Amended) The gaming device of Claim 1, which includes the ~~reels having a plurality of non-interacting symbols.~~ an award associated with each interacting symbol, wherein said award associated with the player selected interacting symbol is provided to the player.

Claim 4 has been amended as follows:

4. (Amended) The gaming device of Claim 1, wherein the ~~display device is adapted to display an interaction between non-adjacent interacting symbols.~~ reels include a plurality of sets of interacting symbols, wherein each interacting symbol in each set interacts with at least one other interacting symbol in said set.

Claim 5 has been amended as follows:

5. (Amended) The gaming device of Claim 1, ~~wherein the display device is adapted to display a credit value associated with~~ wherein the interacting symbols are on non-adjacent reels.

Claim 6 has been amended as follows:

6. (Amended) The gaming device of Claim 1, which includes at least three interacting symbols, wherein upon a generation of said three interacting symbols on the reels, at least two of said interacting symbols are player selectable.

Claims 7 to 12 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer.

Claim 13 has been amended as follows:

13. (Amended)— A method for operating a gaming device having a gaming scheme with a plurality of symbols including at least two player selectable interacting symbols on a plurality of reels, said method comprising the steps of:

- (a) randomly generating and displaying a plurality of symbols;
said symbols on the reels;
- (b) ~~displaying an interaction between~~ enabling a player to select one of the interacting symbols if at least two interacting symbols are randomly generated and displayed on the reels;
- (c) ~~awarding a player a value~~ displaying an interaction between said interacting symbols; and
- (d) providing an award to the player which is associated with the interaction; and selected interacting symbols.

Claim 14 has been amended as follows:

14. (Amended) The method of Claim 13, ~~further including triggering said gaming scheme. wherein the awards associated with each interacting symbols are randomly selected from a plurality of awards.~~

Claim 15 has been amended as follows:

15. (Amended) The method of Claim 13, ~~which includes selecting at least one symbol. wherein the step of enabling the player to select interacting symbols includes enabling the player to select one of the interacting symbols when at least two of the interacting symbols are displayed on a payline associated with the reels.~~

Claim 16 has been amended as follows:

16. (Amended) The method of Claim 13, ~~which includes displaying the interaction between at least two non-adjacent symbols. wherein the step of enabling the player to select interacting symbols includes enabling the player to select two of the interacting symbols when the interacting symbols are displayed on a payline and the award is based on the interacting symbols selected by the player.~~

Claim 17 has been amended as follows:

17. (Amended) The method of Claim 13, wherein the step of enabling the player to select interacting symbols includes enabling the player to select at least one interacting symbol when two interacting symbols are generated on adjacent reels.

Claim 18 has been amended as follows:

18. (Amended) The method of Claim 13, wherein the step of enabling the player to select interacting symbols includes enabling the player to select at least one interacting symbol when two interacting symbols are generated on non-adjacent reels.

Claim 19 has been amended as follows:

19. (Amended) The method of Claim 13, ~~which includes prompting the player to select the symbol.~~ one of the interacting symbols.

Claim 20 has been amended as follows:

20. (Amended) The method of Claim 49 13, which includes audibly prompting the player to select one of the symbol interacting symbols.

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